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Snorri

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who do try to poison the many ferals, deemed nuisances. Sometimes warnings are posted that alert residents of wild animal sightings, advising that all pets be brought in at night. Often bobcats, foxes, owls, hawks, coyotes and even cougars are seen in the area. Sadly, the signs are also posted offering rewards for information about missing pets that never return.

I have seen a favorite young cat of mine, "Flicka" disappear one night after being permitted to go out for an evening stroll. Since that time I insist that all my cats come in every night. They grumble a bit, and settle on the pillows of my bed, and make the best of the situation until morning.

Today, I worry...and even grieve... my beloved calico feral friend for nine faithful years is missing. It has been ten days now since "Calli" came calling for her meals. Every morning, winter or summer she would be at my door, dancing with joy, performing an excited little pirouette dance while I performed my part of our ritual, putting down her bowl of food, then stroking her lovingly, to which she responded with gusto... and only then would she eat.

Over the years Calli won my respect. And I now miss her fiercely. I decided to write about my little friend ... and how she had shown up, quite young and pregnant all those years ago. I would describe how she brought her little kittens to us from their secret hiding place, after three months of only guessing that the big chunks of food that she trotted off with were for her babies. I thought of my amazement when she would leap on the back of a neighbor's dog and ride him out of yard to protect her little ones.

I would honor her memory with descriptions of all the gestures and traits that made her so memorable ... but on the 14th day of her absence, she returned ... I received no clue about where she had been, and life resumed its usual pace ... I suspect that she had been to London to see the queen.



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